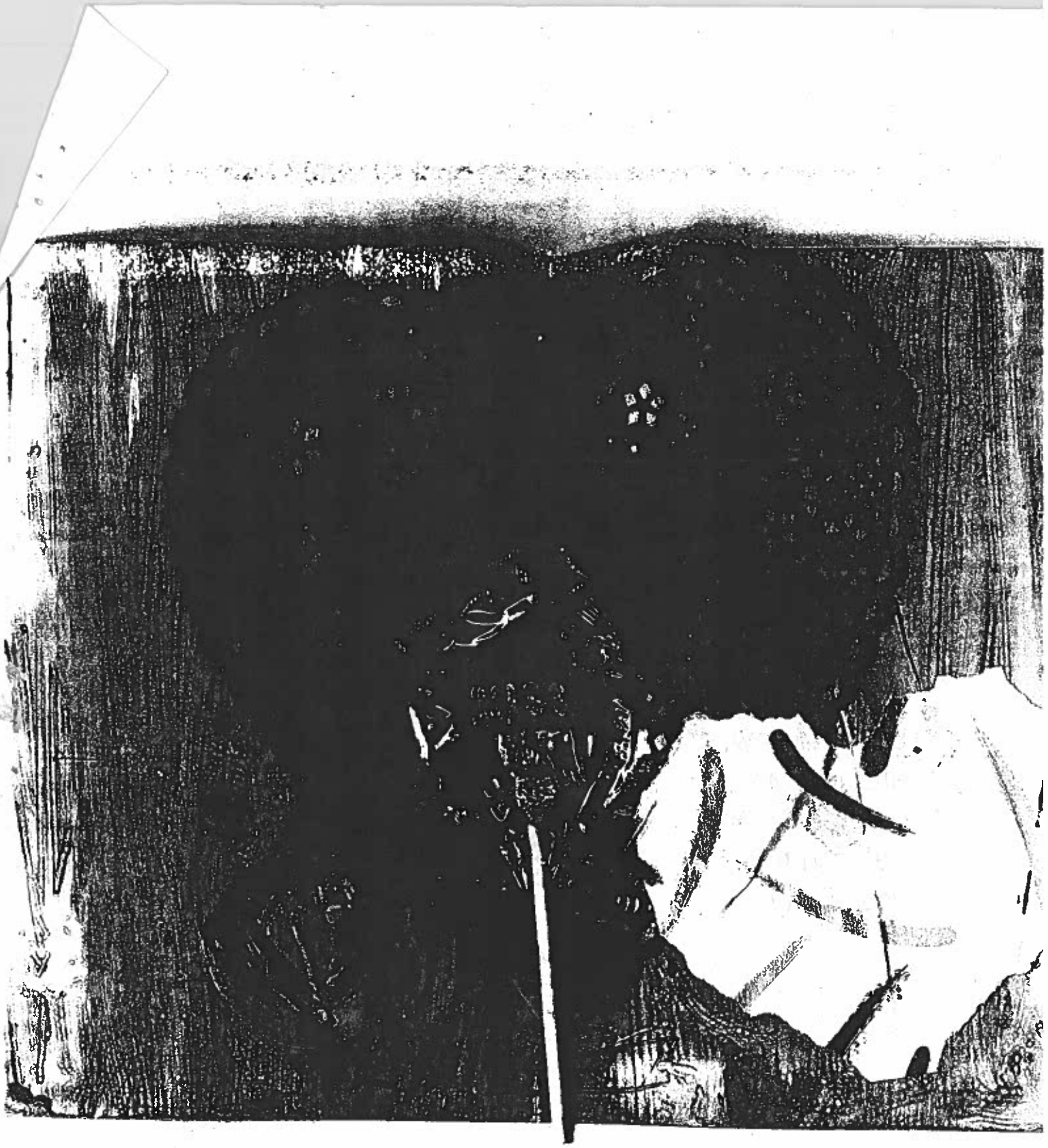
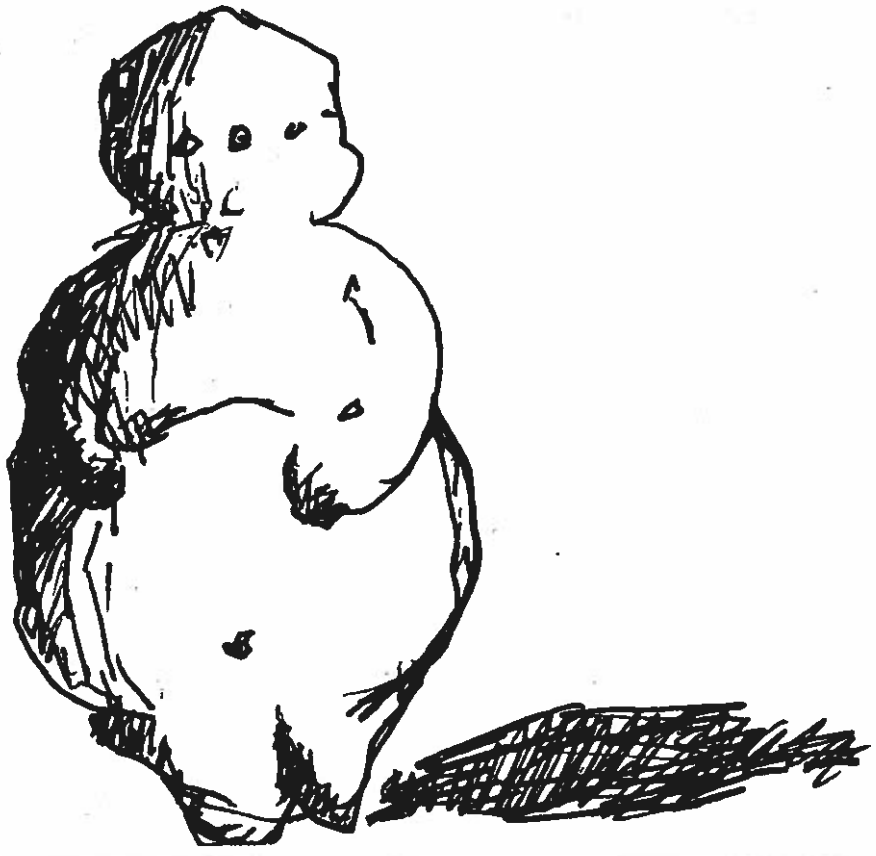


"Lotsa unknown stuff can happen to us tomorrow, but nothin' unknown can happen to us yesterday."

1±

12.30.00

ok. so i may explain some ratiuonal for this, then again, i may not i don't really think that is important. but as you can see this is the collected remainders of letters i have from the last ten or so years of my relationship "experience". why? because i felt like i should, or at least felt like i thought i should, either way the bigger question is.. for spite, to be mean? well probably, i haven't even considered that ramification. i guess one day i said i wopuld and instead of letting i fall by the wayside, as i usually do, i went ahaead and did it. someone asked if i ever seen the inside of my unhappiness, i now have sneaked a little peak at it.. i also have a tremendous ability to live in the past, and certainly pining after lost loves is large part of that. but this more. let me qualify this by saying if i had the letters i sent in return, i would have definatly included them. in fact this might even be a dare to see them again. because in the end i'm the lost out, right? well in any event, just so you know i haven't edited or conveniently left anything out. so with that pseudo-justification,in order of reciept...



may '91- october, or november '92
    michele mcbride

october or november of '92 - march '93
    heather deyling
    -heather and i lived in the same dorm at college, no real
     need to sen letters

march '93 - june '93
    erin braken

july '93 - winter '93 ****
    wendi koontz
    - i don't know what happened to all the letters wendi sent me
      there were hundreds of them and believe me they were ..
      intense..look for wendi to apear again

spring of '94 - early '98
    melissa piekut
    - i'm missing a bunch of the really choice letters from the
      two seperate occasions where i decided it was a good
      idea to sleep with wendi koontz again, so really there
      should be letters from '96 and '97 from both melissa and
      wendi, which are just gone.

september 1, 1998 - december 2, 1998
    rachel jernigan

MICHELE

August 13 1991
Tuesday

Jatt-

I know I said I wasn't going to rite back until next year but I changed my mind. I hope I don't annoy you when I ask you what youre thinking every five seconds. It's just one of those feeling things & I'm sure I'll probably tell you the story one day. I approximate, have 13 days left until I leave, Im partially excited but it's going to suck being without you. I mean I liked being able to get to your house in under 5 minutes. I also liked being with a very beautiful person like yourself.

xxx
ooo Michele

PAGE 2

P.S I got you a book on Jack The Ripper with dead People pictures in it Work out!

P.S.S I ~~tried~~ called your house ~~100 x's~~ yesterday + Sister said she'd tell you but I guess she didn't

P.S.S.S. Your Metallica records Pretty fucking radical dude.

P.S.S.S.S. I have to go to Kent for the job interview so you better be at my house in Henry Rollins Running shorts as soon as I get home

Did I spell it right I suck at spellings
Well actually I'm not

Basically everything. It was pretty fun.

Right now I'm sitting in a classroom waiting for a speech class to start. I'm going to fail this. I hate giving speeches.

I was looking over this letter + I seriously have fucked up handwriting. I'm really really sick today. I can't breath, my throat hurts + I have a really bad cough.

I really miss you! I hate not being able to go over your house whenever I want. ☹ I hate not being able to play with you + make fun of everything in sight. I hate not being with you Matt Eland! Maybe if you want you can come over + listen to some records. See you soon!

Love

Michele

Matt

Sept 10

I just wanted to tell you that you seriously are the best boyfriend anyone could ever ~~[illegible]~~. I know sometimes I crack on you and say why don't you do this or that but you could seriously buy me 1000 flowers + that wouldn't even compare to just being with you.

I love you

Michele

P.S

You gave me your schedule so I'll give you mine so if you ever come down here you might know where I am + why I not home

Monday	8:50-9:40 class 10-2 work
Tuesday	10:45-1:30 classes 3:15-4:30 class
Wednesday	8:50-9:40 class 10-1 work
Thursday	10:45-1:30 classes 3:15-4:30 class
friday	8:50-9:40 class 10-3 work

P.S.S

I might be trying out for WKSU tommorow. ~~I~~ I have to make a demo tape & I have no idea what to talk about. I'll figure something out.

P.S.S.S

I pretty sure I'll be moving to terrace ~~Terrace~~ sometime next week. I'll find out next week + I hope I can go

(turn over)

I miss you!

♡ Michele

Sept 30, 1991

Dear Matt,

I hope you didn't get in too much trouble last nite. I know I'll talk to you on the phone before you receive this letter but I just felt like writing you because I know you like to get letters. I'm not coming over for a while cause your mom is going to totally scream at me because I influenced you to stay late. I'll like you for a moment + say who cares?!

I've been here for about six weeks. That's almost 1/3 of the semester only 2/3's to go! It's not that long (ha'ha!). I hope it will pass quickly + I think it will. If I look ahead, this weekend you're coming up, next weekend is Boston + the weekend after that is homecoming. Then October is over + it soon is November + Christmas Break. Then I just have to endure four & 1/2 months + I'll be with you all summer. Boy am I positive thinking!

I really am running out of time to write this letter but who cares!? It's pretty cold at this moment. I guess that's because its 9 am + I have a short sleeve shirt on.

I'm going to try to make you a tape today. I have to see how much time I have though + maybe I'll even mail it so you can get a package.

Well I miss you + I hope to see you soon.

Love
Michele

I have more time to write so I think I'm just going to have to continue my letter. I have to decide what I'm writing my speech on + I hate giving speeches. I'm really bad talking in public. Well I'm not really bad at it, its just that I get all nervous + then I fuck everything up. Wait! I'm getting a bit negative + I can't do that, can I!? I'm outside right now waiting

for a bus + its about 50 degrees + I have no coat. I have to go to work in a half hour. Id rather sleep but I have to go + write those tickets. Now I'm in my dorm hallway + I'm going to my room to get a sweater. I'm in my room now + I have a sweater on.

Will I have to go to work now + mail E this letter.

I miss you

Michele

Oct 21 1991

Dear Matt

How are you doing today? I hope you are doing ~~fine~~ fine. I know you're ~~attacked~~ attracting millions of women with that new hair cut of yours. I Think I might just have to be your 24 hr body guard. If you agree call me at 1-672-5208. Anyways I just wanted to tell you that I really like the way I feel when I'm with you. I don't know I guess I feel so whole, so real, so happy, so beautiful, so feminine + so special when I'm with you. Please don't ever stop loving me.

Love,
Michele

P.S.

What is life?
Bread is life.

Says Jim Morrison the English teacher

OCT 26 1991

Matt

1:41 AM

SATURDAY

Hi I'm waiting for you to get here + I'm just wondering about things. I'm wondering if you found my notes on your pillow, I'm wondering when you going to get here, I'm wondering what I'm going to do this weekend, I'm wondering how I'm going to deal with my friends (Dave etc). I'm wondering if I'm going to room with Jen, I'm wondering what happened to all my friends who I don't talk to or have seen in years, I'm wondering how I'm getting to Julio on Monday or even if I'm going, I'm wondering ~~class~~ what I'm going to do with my hair, I'm wondering what I'm going to do, I'm wondering why I hurt, I'm wondering why I hurt others, I'm wondering why I'm happy, I'm wondering why you're not here yet, I'm wondering why I'm listening to Erasure, I'm wondering what lies in our future, I'm wondering when I'm going to die or

every day I'm am going to die, I'm wondering where Jen is, I'm wondering what I'm going to get a job for winter + summer, I'm wondering why I quit bass + I'm wondering if I'll start up again, I'm wondering if the radio station's record players will be fixed by next week, I'm wondering what you're going to be wearing when I see you, I'm wondering if you're going to smell like soap, I'm wondering if im going to stay awake, I'm wondering if I'm going to stay awake long enough to I'm wondering why I always think that you're mad at me, I'm wondering what my real hair color is, I'm wondering if it really does hurt to have a baby or maybe its just like a humungous orgasm, I'm wondering why I have been blessed to meet the nicest person in the whole world, I'm wondering what you are thinking about right now, I'm wondering what you think about me, I'm wondering if people talk to me like I talk about them, I'm wondering if I'm too insecure, I'm wondering if I'm too dependent.

on other people, I'm wondering why life is so complicated, I'm wondering why I can't feel sometimes, I'm wondering why I feel so much sometimes that it hurts. I'm wondering why I thought Kent would be so much better than it really is, I'm wondering how much longer I'm going to be able to keep this up, I'm wondering why my hair never wants like I want it to. I'm wondering why I can dance - really [illegible] + other times I suck, I'm wondering where the hell are you?

noone should go thru hard times
no one should live in sorrow
got to face the darken skies
got to lift my head up high

THURSDAY 1:37AM
NOV 7 1991

Matt

I've been thinking about what you said about getting married in Ireland. I know I may have sounded skeptical. ~~about~~ What if you like someone later on & what if you change your mind? has gone thru my head many times. I just wanted to say that I feel very different about you than I ever felt about anyone else I've ever known. I used to go out with people because I thought I needed them to survive. I thought that if I didn't have a boyfriend I was nothing. I am happy that I have finally ~~a~~ evolved

from that stage. I was so tired of feeling that way. The way that our relationship is different is that I can be away from you, be myself finally + then be with you + still be myself. That's probably confusing but that's just how I feel. When I first got here I girls were asking me if I love you + at first I didn't know what to say. It's not like I didn't but that was the first time anyone has ever asked me that + I didn't know what to say. Then I got to thinking, it's not that I don't love you but whenever

I thought I ever loved someone it never was really love just something close too it. I began to recall how I feel when I am with you + even when I think about you + I finally realized that I truely do love you. I know you probably think that you already know that but for awhile I was afraid of maybe not being sure but now I know I am. You have slowly filled a void inside of me that has never been filled quite the way it is NOW. You ~~made me help me feel~~ let me be myself + I do no

one has ever done that before - at least ~~[illegible]~~ not help you have.

I know sometimes when I start talking about flowers + going to dinner + all that boyfriend / girlfriend stuff I might stare right at you + go "hint hint nudge nudge" but its just that. I never really had a boyfriend who did that - I mean I got flowers once in a while but if you ever suprised me with anything - even a piece of bubble gum - I would be content. Its just that I always give give give + I usually never get anything back. Im

4-1-12

MATT—

I Miss you very very much. There's this longing in my heart + I can't wait to see you this weekend. We've been going astray from each other + I think we went far enough. So I'll be waiting 🚗 to see you on Friday

XXX

OOO

Michael

I ♡ you

P.S. we've been going out for 10 months long enough as Sabrina says to get pregnant + have a baby CRAZY EH. NOT.

I Don't know what I'm saying

Matt 7/15/92

Hi! I'm really bored so I decided to write you. My shoes are awesome & so is my green shirt one 2 3 cuatro! Deeeee lite! I'm writing with the varsity disposible ink pen we ~~stold~~ stole from Kinko's. It's so hard to write with though. I'm trying to figure out what I'm going to tell Jhon about Bird. I think I'm going to call Pat Jordan & find out if that apartment next to him is still available. Then I ~~would~~ wouldn't have to worry about them & I'd be closer to everyone when school starts. & I'll be closer to you to. I'm giving myself

15 days to decide if I still want to live at 250 East. My dad was all for me moving out to Kent. I'll be closer for commuting time + it's just a better area to live in. Well it's 10:17 pm right now + I'm listening to Jawbox. I sort of have to poop but not really. Are you taking me to Helmet? Be sure to get the tickets tomorrow. I left a little note for you so you wouldn't forget. Well I hope you have a great day (I would say night but I don't know if you'll find this or not.) Call me tonite if you do find this. Tomorrow I have a job interview at 3:30 but besides that everything else is free. I'll probably go home on Friday unless for some reason plans change. I'm sure I'll talk to you soon

Nichole

Matt

The 1st letter is about Jhon.
The 2nd letter is about me.

I just wanted to let you know + get your feelings ready for my soul's explanations of the Why's of Michele McBride

Me

Don't worry
It won't hurt too much

Smile
I ♡ you!
(for real)

Dear Matt NOV 17 1992

I almost got a ticket today in Willoughby Hills. I was going 44 in a 25 but I got out of it because of my DAD. So I'm pretty happy about that since That probaby would have cost about $100.00.

I can't wait to get my fat belly button pierced! It'll Be fun knowing that none else has this (except you somb) (like when you in a big crowd. I'm going to start wearing mid-driffs + stuff. Sexy, Sexy.

You said you wrote me a letter today on the phone but I'll know you'll never send it. I am just really satisfied with this relationship + if you aren't then there really nothing I can do about it. I'm always afraid that you are going to dump me but I think I just say that because I keep trying to reinforce my bad self image + I want you to help reinforce it by being a dick + dumping me. That's why I'm always so sad. I always think people don't like me to reinforce the image of me not liking myself. Now all I have to do is figure out how to like myself + I'll be all set. I figured this all out from Sociology Class I hope you understand all this but if not just ask. I'm

just really into figuring out why I'm so fucked. Oh yeah. I'm really pissed at my mom (not like you don't know all this but I just want to express my feelings) She acts like at 14 yr old stuck in a 47 year old body. I can't relate to her + it sucks. I'm learning to cope with this problem by laughing instead of getting pissed. It works SO MUCH better than getting angry. There's less stress when you laugh. + there's usually a good reason to especially with my mother.

So Basically I'm sorting out all my problems at home, Oh yeah. I'm not standing up for my Dad but I just don't understand why you need him. Yes he can be an asshole I admit. but he usually pissed at my mom. That's not an excuse to let it out on us but I'm just trying to figure out his reasons, the reasons I get along with my Dad so much better is because ~~I~~ I realized he is the only adult in this house + I need to work with him to reach my goals + aspirations.

I hope none of this is too technical but I just felt I had to get it off my chest.

I also want to explain the Jhon thing. I don't have your letter with me but I'll try my best to answer your inquiries.

I hope None of my explanations sound like excuses. They aren't. They will be how I'm feeling now at this moment + my interpretation of why they occured. o.k.? good!

Let's see. I don't know where to start. I thought you were sick of me even though you were deeply in love with me. I was just to stupid to see that. I was conditioned to be used + I thought you were there with me. I wasn't used to being treated as a normal human being. I was used to be treated like shit. Shit = Jhon. Of coorse the summer is all fuzzy to me. I can't remember when what happened when. I can't even tell you when I moved in or out. I think I block things out when they're bad or they hurt me. Unfortunately that means half the things that have happen to me since 1988. Maybe this is why I'm so sad. This is not an excuse either. You know how I can't remember shit. My memory of what I'm doing now is though. I can remember what I did last week. Maybe I'm getting happy? Who knows. Anyways

I want you to know that this rendevous didn't mean shit. It was a sex-no feeling thing. That why I moved out. I was getting into the no-feelings mode that's bad for me. I need to feel even though I detest it.

I didn't have sex with you because of that reason. I was trying to turn all feelings off for you entirely. Don't ASK me why; I have no idea. I WAS a lost little girl I guess.

Well I hope I answered some questions. It wasn't your fault Matt. Don't ever think that. I just go in these phases. ~~sad~~ happy ~~sad~~ but I never know when they come. That's why I'm trying to stop them - get on w/ my life. I know you wanted specifics but I really can't answer them. I don't know. It's true. I don't. If you want to talk about anything this please do. Let's get it out + get over it.

I'm sorry for all this pain. We just have to promise to keep communicating. That's what started it. We lost touch w/ our feelings + our feelings for each other.

I love you
Michele

I haven't really dwelled over our situation. I just want to establish + keep in contact with my friends Dave + Sabrina. I understand that they're both in the middle of this Hell + I acknowledge that. I just don't want to lose them among all this chaos.

I want to believe that you still feel for me but sometimes I feel as if I made you change your mind. Maybe I did. I don't know. I just want this to all work out. I understand that your frustrated with our long relationship but I think ending it now would destroy our friendship. Not because of heather but because our friendship is weak ~~it~~ it + trust must grow before any drastic change can be made. If I have to lose you as a lover I want to keep you forever as a friend but right now at this time if we left each other our friendship would disappear. I hope you see that. I need for both me + you to be stable before any changes. That may be hard for you + I need a response from your heart. You are very special to me + if you feel our relationship is over You tell me. I think though that

it has just begun + even if we aren't lovers in a while I hope to ~~always~~ always hold you as one. I don't know why I'm so into you Matt. Part of it may be stability. Another could be your beautiful eyes. I'm just terribly in love with you + it won't go away. This isn't one of those lust relationships. ☺ When I think of you I don't think of sex (sometimes I do though haha). Usually I can just close my eyes + I feel you with me holding me + giving me strength. Sometimes though I feel you holding me back from exploring but I think that's a price I have to pay for being + feeling so content with you. That's why I think I'm so reluctant to give you up. You let me be me + find out who I am but don't let me get too far away + keep me in focus of my dreams. Yes so you are in them but I'm there too + that's important to me and I know to you too.

Well I hope I didn't confuse you entirely but I was inspired today to reach into this deep soul of mine + give you my heart. I hope it helps you. Don't be afraid.

I love you now + forever

Michele

I'll do your home wak
you can sleep sleep sleep

Soy Milk

Cheese tortillini

you'll get all your Shirts back, I'll go to work for you

all the sex you want in 24 hours

I'll type all your papers

I'll file my nails

I'll feed the dog

The REMote control

The inside of the bed so you don't fall,

you can play the Drums whenever you want.

I'll drive you wherever you want

SOY MILK

Vanilla (Your favorite)

My boobs (all 4 of them?!?)

RAIN DANCE

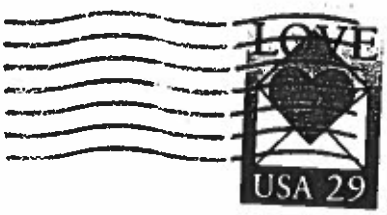
really me fact me I'd lose you to Heather but the fact that I was the reason. Hey! I don't blame you. If I was in your shoes I'd probably be doing the same thing. Sometimes part of me wants to say that it's over but then ~~any~~ I ~~stalling~~ ~~this~~ ask myself if this is really something I want to lose you over + the answer is NO! I know you ~~probably~~ probably don't need this letter to complicate things but these are my feelings about this + you + I haven't been able to get them out rationally until now. I mean I'll understand if you don't want to see other girls but you won't

really what you've lost until I'm gone for good. I just need to know how You're feeling + what YOU want to do. I'm on an emotional rollercoaster (one that I don't need) + I want to get off but I can't cause it's still moving. Please just give me some substance instead of I Don't know. I know it's hard but hopefully in the end it will be worth it for one of us or maybe both. I'm just lost in a whirlwind of emotion + I know you hate dealing with

these kinds of things but this time
its a must - I'm not scott Goodstein
(Ha! Ha!) anyways I just had to
tell you how I feel. You know I
love you + it would suck if I
lost you but if you think it's want
you want to do do it. Its
your decision. I'm the one who
fucked up not you. So as my
last ditch effort to save me from
drowning ⇒ Please Pick
me !!!

Michelle

row
of course



Eland
Box 34 Verder
Midway Dr.
Kent, OH. 44243-1007

ERIN —

Well, matthew ... thur.

Needless to say - I didn't go to class once again today, well, I kind of went there - sat down in my first class for 3 minutes & then left. And here I am now in the McKinley Mon. park at a picnic table in front of the pollution filled stream that runs past. Pleasant, huh. I'm watching all of the middle age & beyond men & women who are seemingly trying to burn calories walking the track. (I think they are trying to run from their cellulite.) But I'm fine as long as no one tries to pick me up. I guess like your library, the park has become my friend as of late. Well, enough of that. I very much like my relationship with you. Above all, I'm not really frustrated by the presence of your past, but I do think it is something you should finalize. You need to learn to be direct. But I understand. the one thing that should remain first & foremost is that we shouldn't let our outside grievances interfere between us. That can always be a problem between two people. As of right now, I don't know where our relationship will take us, I don't think I could. But, as of now, I'm not interested in seeing anyone else - if that's a way to word it? I like you, I think you are a

wonderful, sincere person. I feel comfortable & secure with you. Not like the anxious, somewhat nausea, I felt with X@11. Just don't get me involved in any triangles or I'll injure you. I think on a general scale right now, though, I'm really kind of in a state of depression. Like when things aren't going as you'd hoped & you've sort of lost direction. I'm just tired of being disappointed. I definitely need to move on & move out. I feel like I'm weighted down with all of this unnecessary pressure. there's really nothing for me here & I'm just really not sure of where to go. I'm saying I really want to move out & I think I've found someone compatible to live with. And I really don't want this to be another one of those instances where all I do is talk about it & then end up in the same place I started. So if you are serious & really have no qualms about it then please, let's do it. It seems my only light at the end of the tunnel presently. I will go crazy if I have to feel confined to all of this & all of these people if I remain a dependent much longer! or if I have to live in a fucking dorm next semester! I read all of these stories about how people's

[redacted] to better [redacted] I'm willing to [redacted] — No doors are opening. I feel like there is this big thumb pressing down on me to keep me in my whole. I guess I also have a fear of failure. All of my life I had thought & hoped that may be there was this big calling for me & now that I'm out here — I don't know what it is or how to reach it & that frustrates me! I think Jeff was more of a security blanket. He was a security from my past that I had longed for & I knew that he was damaging — but I thought maybe if I'd fit into the role - the picture - perfect role of what my parents wanted for me & what society expects from an 18 yr. old girl — college, marriage, kids & career. [redacted] & everyone would've been happy. — ? I guess I just wanted to fit into the norm. [redacted] Sometimes it would seem so much easier to sellout. But my gosh, I'm only 18. And I hate that because I sense the obligation that my parents are trying to push me into — my role.

Maybe it would be easier if they [redacted].
Maybe if I told them that [redacted].
to move than [redacted] just because [redacted] try to pick
[redacted]. - But like that's even an issue.
OK - the subject is getting old.
I like you - you like me -
together we are somewhat sane.
I'm sick of complaining &
bitching. - cause that's
not what we are here for.
I'm going to be happy, happy, happy.
- Even if I have to take everyone
down with me.
I'm gonna do what I have to &
stop letting these idiotic people
get in my way.
I have substance.
... And I'm good enough, & smart enough, &
dog-gone it, people like me.
Well, I leave you on that note & get
out of Stuart Smalley mode.

Love~
Erin

Oh, the necklace
Nevermind
[redacted]

P.S.
thank you for being
my audience.

To my "o.b.e" lover-

thur.

thanks for the rubberband?! - I'll find some creative purpose for it hola. things are moving right along down here. A bit too slow perhaps. So, they finally got a vegan line at Kent. And like now you can eat a vegeterian meal without having cheese in it! Tons & tons of cheese to help you become extremely constipated.. Right now I'm sitting in my room in the middle of procrastinating (one of my fortés). I have a paper to write for my obnoxious idiot of an English professor. I think he has the hots for me - he may be 60+ & partially blind, but hey, bonus points are bonus points! Have you done anything fun & adventurous lately? Oh, & since I'm not really at Kent any more, does that mean my Naked club membership card expires! Was last week throttle Bottoms last show? Someone told me that?

You know, I'm glad I stayed home this semester, I've been doing a lot of spring-cleaning in my life. I've started getting rid of a lot of negative aspects. Well, I'm babbling... Do you ever really have a lot to say but can't come up with anything substantial to write.

For now...
-Erin

P.S. If you ever come across any grab machines, and feel the need to waste a quarter - win me something!

Dear Matt-

Hi, you sound as silent as enthused as me. I'm having one of those boxed-in feelings & it seems as though I'm surrounded by nothing but negative people. I'm also in a rather negative relationship right now, so that might have something to do with it. I can't seem to figure out why I'm still dealing with it, either. Maybe sometimes I'm weaker than I think. Ok, so let me see, this confuses me, you are sad because your ex is blowing you off and you want something traumatic to happen to her & anyway, what's up with you & heather or is this ~~was~~ just one of those male things? When you said you finally know what you want & it's too late - what did you mean? what do you want? I know you're going to be really jealous, but I'm going to see Walt Disney World on ice next week! I finally heard back from Julie - she sent me a valentine - which is more than I got from you! - Hey, when am I getting this great big prize that you won for me?? - don't make me get violent! - Do you still do your radio show? oh, sorry I missed you guy's show Wed. but my gas tank was on E. well matthew, adieu.

- Erin

p.s. I might be up sometime in the near future cause my friend might be going up there next fall & he wants the big tour.

Mr. Going-off at 3AM-

Geez!

thanx for the zine! Liked the paragraph on the 2nd to last page. - Very well put! Actually that exactly how I'm feeling right now! Had a horendous day - need of a hug - will have to settle for my cat licking me. Well - sounds like you've gotten yourself into a little screwed love triangle! But the only thing I can suggest is running away with me to Austria & having many, many kids & become goat-herders. - Anyway, things will work themselves out, I believe something positive comes out of every bad situation - no matter how small. (or maybe they'll both collaborate & plot for your death!) Hey, look at me - I've re-entered (unwittingly) a potentially psychologically-emotionally damaging circumstantial relationship... to become a better person. Actually NO... I'm miserable Fucking & on the verge of an anxiety attack right now, Ya know.. god-forbid someone could be real & actually fill their words. I've lost faith in about everyone I know! This sounds really pathetic but the only person I can even stand to talk to right now is you. (or then again, this is a letter.) I mean, I try not to depend on others for my happiness, but sometimes they just really bring me down. (ok - won't go into detail - you dumped

on me first.) — No, I'm glad you confided in me. Ya know, I expect some immaculate sign when I think I've found my "one". Like a big thumbs up sign in the sky! Hey, I've been trying to put your personality traits together & figure out what your sign is. Are you Leo or Virgo? (Or maybe I'm way off.) Talked to Freestyle Chris tonight - I went off on a random long distance calling spree. Don't you hate it when you really need to talk to someone & you call everybody but no one's home - but Chris was of course Halle - actually I just called her to find out what station WKSR was on. (forget) I call her from time to time & bug her - cause I know she's always home & she loves to chat so. Oh, my mom wants to know if you are intending to be sacrileligious by calling your zine "sacrificial lamb". - She looked over it when it came in the mail.

Well, that's all I can say for now.

Erin

I can't even get 730 AM down here! - oh well. unless of course I built this huge tower out of reynolds wrap!

Oh & I did make you a valentine - but I didn't know if you'd appreciate it so I didn't

(This is the letter I wrote before talking to her, but I figured, what the heck, might as well send it!)

Well Matthew...
I did not get this letter until Saturday because someone put the wrong zip on it!(wonder who?) 44706 not 44106. Anyway, I'm so screwed right now. I have 47 sketches due for my art class next Fri. and I haven't begun them as of presently!! Like I said I should major in procrastination. It was great seeing you Mon. wish I could've stayed longer and chatted, but I felt you had other things to attend to..
After we left Verder we went to college towers for a bit and then to Denny's to watch the drunks scampering about.(the cool thing is that I did find five bucks in the snow)
Don't you hate it when you realize you've been forced to enter a role.-you may not have any clue as to what I'm talking about but I'm just thinking aloud. I guess my problem is is that I don't want to end up typical...
Are you real? This is a characteristic that I've been finding to be most lacking in people lately. I hate it when people do things because they want to please you and not do it for themselves. I'm going off on this today in particular because last night I just realized how disappointing some people can be. My "friend"(you know who's) birthday was yesterday and he felt the need to go upstairs with his friends and smoke etc. This is the same guy who has been telling me he is going to get his life cleaned up and straightened out. So I go upstairs and to justify himself because I found him out he invites me in? If you are going to fuckin change do it for yourself not for me! I'm sick of weak people. The sad thing is that I do care about him, but I can't be with someone I don't believe in.
Hey, you think I was joking about Austria don't you? I'm dead serious, if someone bought me a ticket out and away from Canton, even Ohio, right now I'd go. I feel so cofined and supressed, I guess I have this fear that I'm going to end up just like my parents and have the family and do the nine to five thing without ever really grasping life.(that sounds just a little too melodramatic, doesn't it.) I just don't want to look back on my life when I'm fifty and find nothing I've done that was satisfying. So, you think I should go out with you? What fringe benefits would I alot from this..just to be with someone who's averagely incredible? A virgo none the less.Hmmmm....
(It's quite difficult to flirt in letters isn't it.)

-One who is merely
hum-drum, also.

P.S.If ever in need of hug
call.(we might make deliveries.)

-Since you said you were broke I (Hey- this could be 4 tries at a grab machine!)

Matthew(the indirect and indecisive)..
I enjoyed our little conversation, even though my bill might be rather high. So, does it make you nervous that I am very perceptive? I felt somewhat strange after talking to you last night, I can't describe it, it was like there needed to be something more? -I don't know? Very wierd.
Not to change the subject but, I think Michelle still really affects you, doesn't she. It's probably one of those things you'll never really shake. But I guess it's better to have loved and lost, than to never have loved at all.(oh, so cliche'-ish)
I think I'm going to call about this job for the summer where you can work at a camp up in the Catskills for handicapped adults, it sounds really interesting. Let me know what's going on about Dayton, cause I just discovered that my parents are going away for that weekend and I might have to stay with my sister. Well, sorry but I have to end now- school beckons.
Hope to see you soon. If you decide to run away, say this weekend maybe we can do something. Your call.

-E

P.S. (hope you like your prize, that was included) with this letter!
It's your very own Shawn cut-out - you can dress him up! - Collect all 3!

MATTHEW,

I love you, and you know why I love you... because you listen to me, you make me feel like what I have to contribute is important and you take me seriously. You respect me, you do not make me feel inferior, and you make me feel free. Getting attention from you is not like pulling teeth! the only thing I fear though, is that this will all end once my novelty wears off.

And when I'm bored with you, I'm not. You're one of the least boring people I know - we may get confined together too often, but not bored. I find superficial people that talk to you only to hear about themselves to be boring.

You know how I got that tape from *G!! & how he tried to get in touch with me after all this time. Well, to be honest, I'm afraid to talk to him. Frankly, I'm not ready to endure his crippling words... he always has this way of making me doubt myself, where I stand, and what I want. (Like my parents) But I know what I don't want, I don't want to lose you. [redacted]. But it doesn't have to be.

I love when you touch me in a place that Jeff never was able to reach. I, I, I yi yi.

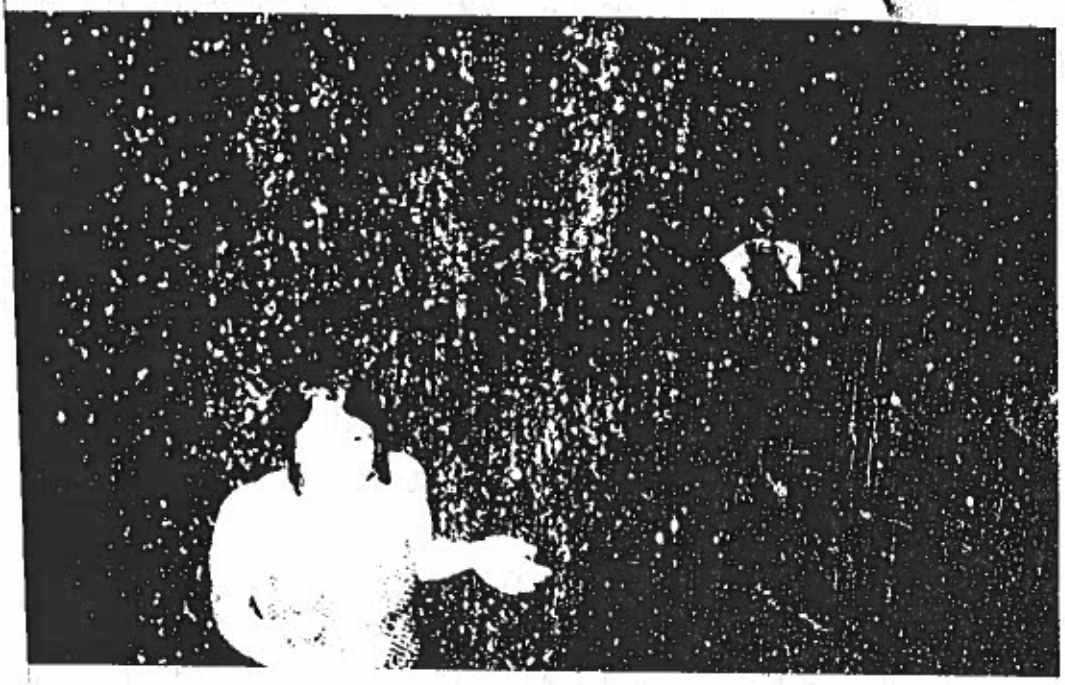
OK, this just popped into my mind & I feel the need to express it. Why do you always wait until I'm out of your room before listening to your messages on your machine when you get phone calls when I am there? -- Point of curiosity or paranoid bitch?! (You decide.)

Boy, got a 10 page paper due tomorrow — not going to class. Doing something constructive! Hey, do you know fat, dumb, gross people who don't realize it & think they're cool & everyone pretends to go along with it & no one really tells them the truth - Well, aren't you ever afraid that you might be one of these people living in a world of self ignorance?

Well, anyway...

Love ~

D. - your teacher of the arts



MELISSA

Oct. 28

hello dear. I got your nice letter today & it made me very happy, but it also made me sad b/c I wish that I could see you more often, but. I don't think that your letter answered the question that I was talking about before. I think that I can kind of describe things like this. First, unfortunately, unlike you, I don't feel like I can completely be me around you (for the most part). This kind of goes along with the whole inhibitions thing & the whole good thing. Second. I think part of everything is that I think that things are changing between us, which I think are very good, but It's really odd for me & I don't know how to react or feel about it. It's kind of like how one wishes for something & then when it happens one doesn't know what to do. Does that make sense? I really want to impress to you that I don't think that it is anyway bad. But I think that it is kind of scary to me because it seems like all the silly games are over & its a real life thing. ~~[illegible]~~ (Not to be taken too seriously) but. Everything's good. I really have a lot (as always) that I need to talk over with you. But I don't think that a letter is a very place. So I'm very glad that you are going to visit & STUFF.

I hate that I can't send mail to you b/c I probably would send a lot more. When are you having? Oh, please tell me if your phone bill is a lot so that I can give you $ b/c I feel bad that I can't call you & it would make me feel better. When you come to visit - will you please bring Teddy? b/c I have been so very sad & I think that he would not make me feel not so very sad. I can't express to you how much I miss everyone. It's really hard for me to talk w/ Janice b/c I miss her so much that it makes me sad to talk to her. Tell her to tape that & everything. Kisses.

Melissa.

Hello sweetheart
I figured that now would be the best time for me to write because I am at work and my boss is on vacation for the week
so I apologize for typing but this is the only way for me to pretend like I am working

I have been doing a little bit of investigating on the free masons
and it is amazing because not one source will give me an answer-everything is very vague
most people will say, "well, they are a secret society... blah blah blah"
but no one will tell me what they do
but this is what I have found out:

* they perform rituals
* they use alchemy
* they are political
* they is another society that girls can join (I forget the name)
* worship pan and bacchus?

so that's about it
I find this whole thing very intriguing
it is even more interesting that most of the earlier presidents were freemasons, yet no one knows what that entails exactly
but I found this in the cd rom encyclopedia:

Freemasonry

Freemasonry (frē´mā´sen-rē), teachings and practices of the secret fraternal order known as the Free and Accepted Masons. There are 6 million members worldwide, mostly in the U.S. and other English-speaking countries, and no central authority. Its ideals include fellowship, religious toleration, and political compromise. Drawing on guild practices of medieval stone-masons, the order's first Grand Lodge was organized in London (1717). In America, Masons were active in the Revolution and continued as a force in later politics. In Europe, they included VOLTAIRE, GOETHE, HAYDN, MAZZINI, and GARIBALDI. Freemasonry's identification with 19th-cent. bourgeois liberalism led to reaction, e.g., in the U.S., the ANTI-MASONIC PARTY; its anticlericalism brought the hostility of the Roman Catholic Church. Totalitarian states have always suppressed Freemasonry. Masons have a complex systems of rites and degrees, subsidiary organizations for women and children, and lodges noted for their parades and fraternal gatherings.

I don't know when you will receive this, but sharon and I were planning on visiting on Saturday
we are really going to "go out" in kent because we both really miss it
I am not sure what is going on with the sleeping situation
I don't think that it would be a good idea for sharon to stay there
and she doesn't know if she can stay at Jim and Derek's so
I told her that if she wanted I would get a hotel with her or something
but of course I still want to see you
we definitely want to go to breakfast on Sunday, so hopefully you will join us
and I think that sharon wants to at least briefly meet everyone that you live with so she will know who we are talking about
and I hope that you will be able to meet us for a couple of drinks.
I know that you are planning on recording this weekend
and this trip is kind of a "me and sharon" getting away
so I hope that we are on the same page

I had a wonderful time last weekend, I just wish it wasnt so crappy out
I really like going to your moms house

I never really know if you like to do that or not
its nice to hang out at your house but I always feel like I never get to talk to you
and I feel uncomfortable but I have been trying to be better at that

I think that I am going to see *Female Perversions* on Thursday
It looks like a really good movie

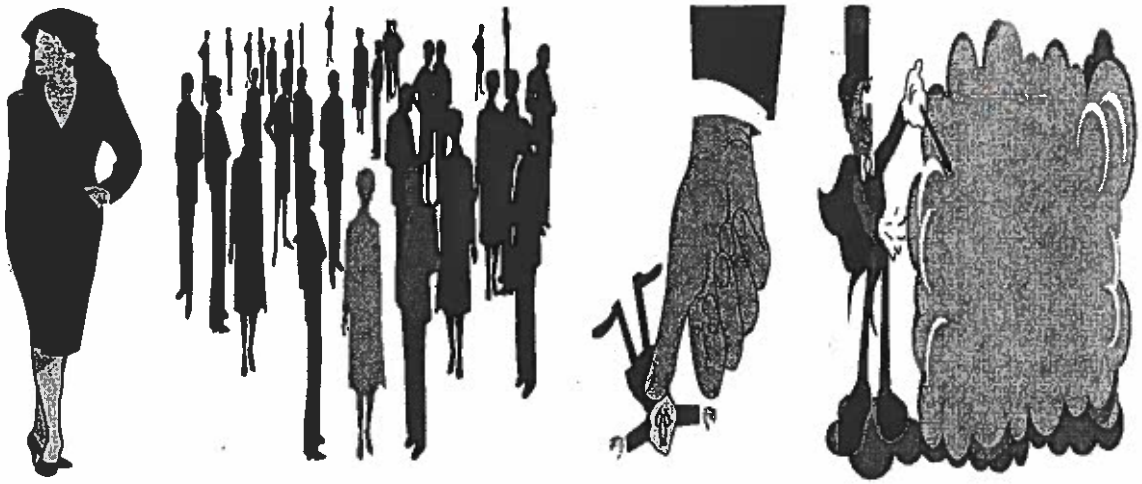
well I think that you will happy to hear that yesterday I pooed twice and today I already pooed once
something really funny happened at work
on Monday this lady Marcy brought me in Bing Cherries
and I was all by myself in the office
eating cherries and stuff, and then I had the worse gas all day
and I did not care because I was by myself and I didn't think that it mattered
but when I went to leave marcy said that I really shouldnt eat too many cherries because I might have stomach problems
see her office is right outside the door so I think that some of the smell mitigated into her space
it was very funny

I was looking at graduate schools on "the net" (sorry, but it is the fastest way to get information)
and I looked at Case Western
I never thought of that before
I was wondering how you felt about that
I could live in Cleveland but not kent

well
I am glad that we decided to write regularly
it gives me a chance to talk to you and not be interrupted...

miss and love

m



6/10/9

Hello. I have been carrying around this card forever. So I'm happy that I am able to use it. I wasn't going to write again until I got a letter from you, but classes are very boring. I can't concentrate & my head feels really funny.

My mom really freaked me out about the P.T. thing, but I was kind of glad I told her. It's always better to talk about things. Her & my dad went to Atlantic City, but I don't think they won a lot of money. I really want to go rafting soon. I realize that everyone's schedule isn't going to correspond. I think that I'll just going to pick a day & whoever can go will. Of course, you have to go. raftin I don't know what I will do without you. I hope that you can go to the Squirrel Nut Zippers show. We can practice our swinging techniques.

I was looking @ my friends pictures from Italy & everything looks so amazing. I was just getting frustrated because I was recognizing statues, etc. but I wouldn't remember the little stories behind them. I think that I'll need to "brush up" a little, so that I can appreciate everything.

I went to the cathedral & sat in the sun & the grass. It was really nice. I've been getting information from schools. What do you think of Chicago? I would love to go to North Western. Are you recording this weekend? I haven't heard you play forever, i didn't even know you had new songs.

I did not have too much to say. Sorry. Hope you like the card.

Miss and Love,

Melissa

THURSDAY 6/26.

Hello. I AM SO CRABBY TODAY, that seems to happen when i do not get enough sleep. - MOMENT DISTRIBUTION - I was planning on visiting ya on SATURDAY. I didn't KNOW if ya were working, but SINCE you were supposed to play on SATURDAY, I figured that you probably were off.

I had FUN @ the show on TUESDAY. They are playing again in Pitt, but it is A PART of the "HORDE FESTIVAL". I went to that festival once, it wasn't too bad. There is always something FUN ABOUT AN outside event. Plus: RACCOON CREEK CAMPGROUND is nearby & that's always FUN.

SHARON AND I decided that the CANOEING & rafting weekend will be @ the END OF July (last weekend). I ASKED her if I could invite you & she said that would be OK, however, she did NOT want it to be me, ya, jan, ken & her. ERGO, i WAS WONDERING IF SOME OF YOUR FRIENDS WANTED TO GO (TOM would be FUN, ofcourse.)

I like the IDEA OF writing letters, but I really DON'T have MUCH to say. Everything that is exciting, I DON'T think ya want to hear about..

(I think that ya make me ANGRY all the time & our entire relationship is a lesson in FRUSTRATION.)

OK. So that was a little depressing...

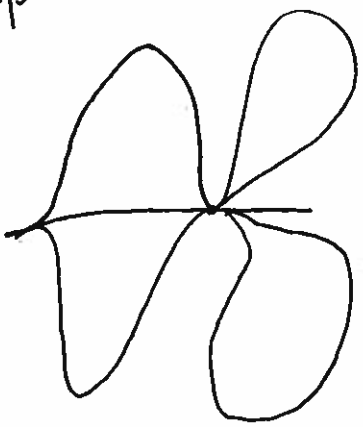
Quote of the year...

I went for a walk after I talked to you. I finally went to Fipps Conservatory. I didn't go inside, but I walked thru the gardens. It was real nice, and I think that ya would like it.

I am glad that I will see ya this weekend. Pittsburgh is starting to be boring, (NOT that Kent is super fun) but a change of scenery would be nice.

I don't know why I always dwell on the T-Rex thing. I just feel this strange chemistry. Do ya think I am delusional?

:- you need to be honest about it - AKA - honest with yourself.
DO NOT KNOW IF this will MAKE sense - but i will try to explain -
: used to feel panicked & urgent ABOUT everything & NOW i DONT
really care. I'M NOT sure IF it is because I'M more happy w/ me.
OR IF I really care about you less or if i'm more happy w/
our relationship. What do you think?



Sorry this is late, but as you know, we always have good intentions. I have your card sitting by my desk & it makes me real happy & makes me laugh.
I thought this card was very appropriate. Hee. Hee I found a good Valentine's Day card (with a bad envelope)
I was happy to hear the good news. I hope everything works out well.
I hope that you come to see me soon
because I miss you a lot.

Just wanna wish you
a Happy Valentine's Day!

Miss ya!
Melissa.

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA
Jet skiing off Harbour Town has become a very popular water sport.

Photo © Werner J. Bertsch

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Hello. Everything is working out a lot better. I don't know if we can go to my cabin b/c I don't want to leave Jasper & Phoebe again. I'll have to talk w/ Sharon. I might have something else we can do. The cabin isn't too much fun & there might be other people there. I forgot to tell you that I went to the doctor's b/c I left & they said not to worry about anything. I have a seashell especially for you.

Matthew Eland
1763 E. Main Street
Kent, OH 44120

Blast furnance → iron ox. → Fe

hello - i am bored @ work again - everyone is gone & it's only wed. - that means that the next 2 days i'm not going to have anything to do - which is real nice & relaxing. i took someone's radio so at least i can listen to that. i had a super horrible evening last night. First, Sharon (on Monday) told me that Heather was having a party & I asked her to leave a note telling me when & stuff, but Sharon never left the note, so I figured that nothing was going on, & I just sat at home super bored b/c the electricity was out. THEN - yesterday i was talking to her & i was telling her that i was upset w/ Dean & she said that he didn't say anything to her & i asked if he called here & she said that she invited him & his friends to Heather's & if that wasn't rude enough - i told her how bored i was & she told me that i should have found a place to go & read. i just don't even understand - it's almost as if she is being spiteful. But that's not the end - yesterday i was exercising & she told me that Heather & Eric were coming over → & i just wanted to hide in my room b/c 1) heather is annoying & 2) when Ya & i weren't "dating" Eric & i think were kind of talking to each other, etc, & i haven't seen him since then - & i felt real icky & uncomfortable. So i hid in my room & i was going to watch a movie & i went to get into bed when i realized that a cat peed in my bed. - so, i was really mad & i was trapped in my room so i couldn't go & wash the stuff until they left. [redacted] After a while Sharon came into my room & i told her what happened & she looked at me - & i looked at what i had on (my sleeping clothes w/ the little Kung Fu shoes). i thought that i was going to hit her. It's just real frustrating b/c she is acting like i never want to do anything, but that's not true - it's just that during the week i don't like to go out to bars & stuff or stay out too late b/c i'm so exhausted @ work, i can hardly function & it's already hard enough not to act like a complete idiot.

i went out to dinner w/ my cousin, Denny, & he was not even himself. it was super uncomfortable & unsettling. he told me @ my brother's graduation party that he was sad & he didn't know what to do.

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so i suggested that we go out to dinner & i thought that he was goin to talk about it. But - i was so nervous during dinner that there was something really wrong & i didn't want to find out. & like AN idiot i just kept babbling & talking & talking, it was so weird b/c you know that i can talk about most things (whether or not i can say the words directly or not) but i couldn't bring anything up. he was acting weird - shaky & almost paranoid - snappy - i felt like if i tapped him he would break. it's hard & disorienting to look @ someone you have known your entire life act completely different. i don't know if i am overreacting or what but i'm afraid that something horrible is going to happen. i feel like i need to do something for him but i don't know what to do. i feel as if i need to tell my mom or aunt - but he told me that he did not want anyone to know - i want to tell them so that they can watch & make sure everything is OK since I am not around a lot, but i don't want to break his trust - i just feel like i am over my head & i don't know what to do to help.

Listen to how crazy this is → my mom went to a psychic & last fall ~~My mom & aunt went to this psychic~~ & she told them about my friend Jake's - then - i had a dream about him last night - crazy. i think that my mom is going to take me to a psychic next weekend. i want to go, but i am afraid that i might hear bad things - my mom was surprised that i wanted to go.

i got this brochure from cedar point & it is $28.95 all day & 18.95 after 5^00. Some days it is open until 11^00. & some days it is open until 12^00, i might want to go w/ the after 5^00 b/c i get pooped out.

I kind of wanted to figure out what going on next weekend. i want to go to see you play in Cincinatti. but

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i think that it might be too much driving around

i don't think that me & Jasper are friends any more

→ i really wanted Mary Mazer's address

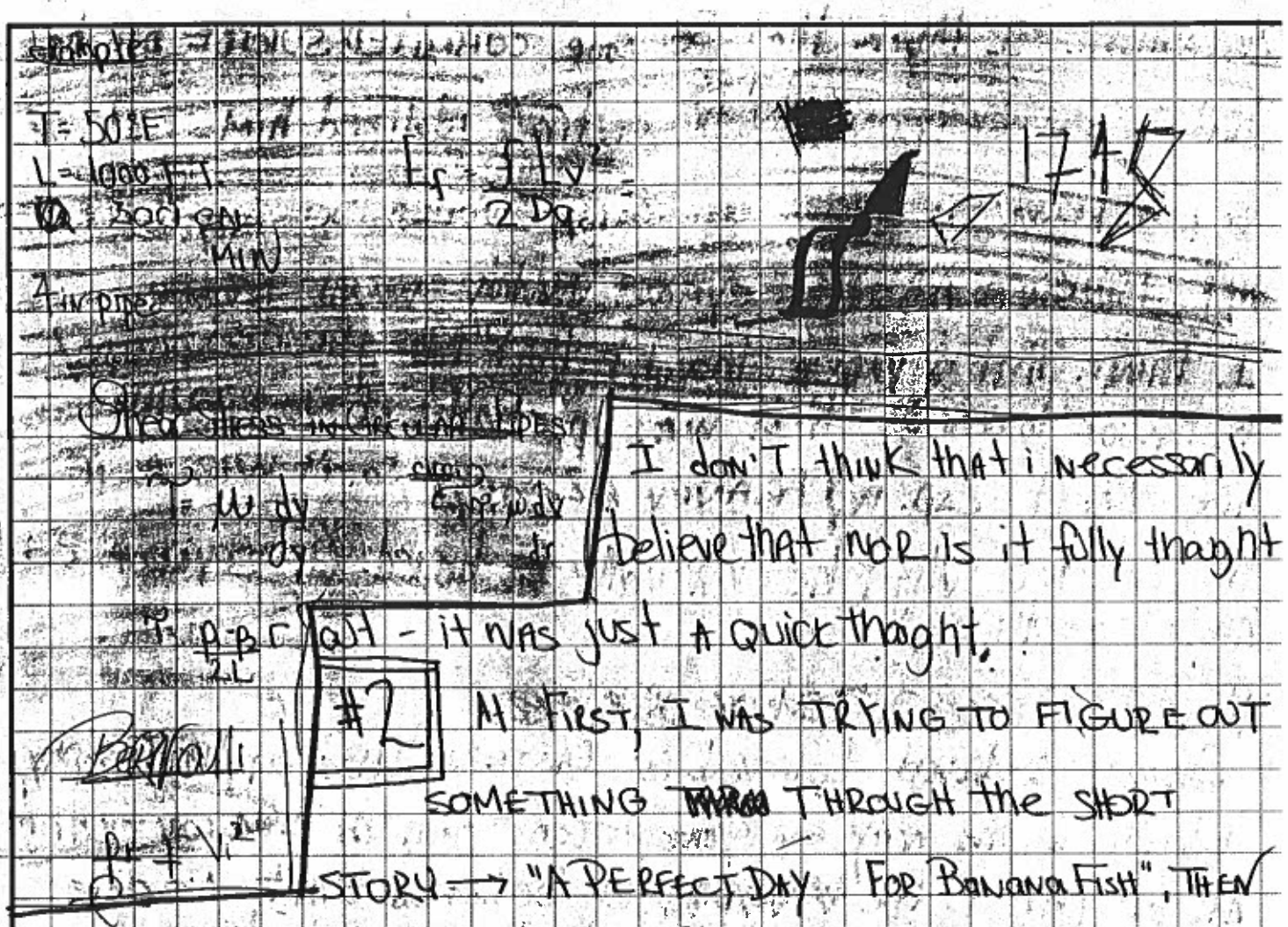
OK- so here is my theory on Seymour's Suicide:

introduction - i had a couple of ideas to start out:

1) i pretty much figured out the Religion had to have something to do w/ it b/c of how much J.D. Salinger talked about it, etc. Unfortunately - i couldn't really figure out too much b/c I really do not know a lot about Eastern religions. The only religious background that i have is Christianity. So - i thought - well of course he kind of played a "Christ" figure [redacted]

but - instead of being killed he chose his own death →

Main → Salinger's intention used Seymour's death to mock Christianity & which in turn further promotes E. Religions.



I don't think that i necessarily believe that nor is it fully thought out - it was just a quick thought.

#2

At first, I was trying to figure out something through the short story → "A Perfect Day For Banana Fish", then I read Seymour - An Introduction & found out that the "author" was Buddy & Buddy wrote "A Perfect Day ..." & that was his interpretation of the suicide. Which if you think about it- his story was really strange 1st → Buddy I think both idolized & resented seymour Buddy portrayed Seymour as a weird person who liked little girls & the entire story about Banafish is confusing-

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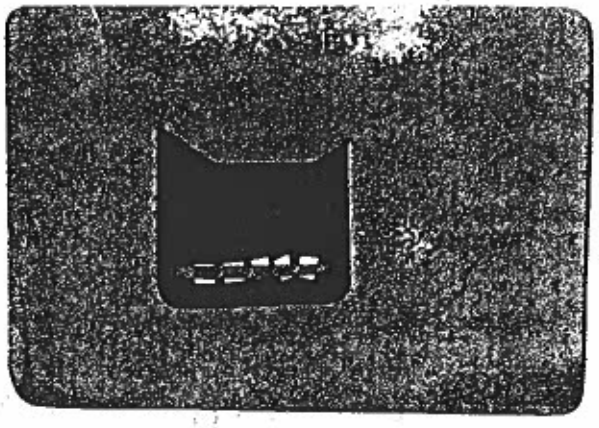
Anyways... I think that Seymour commited suicide b/c he had to. Everyone in his entire idolized him - not one & more person in the Glass Family would do anything b/f thinking about seymour. Buddy would [redacted] I think that Seymour thought that [redacted] this response/ behavior towards him was partially if not fully his fault - esp. w/ Franny & Zooey. So, it was as if he created what he eventually [redacted] hated. (If seymour could hate something).

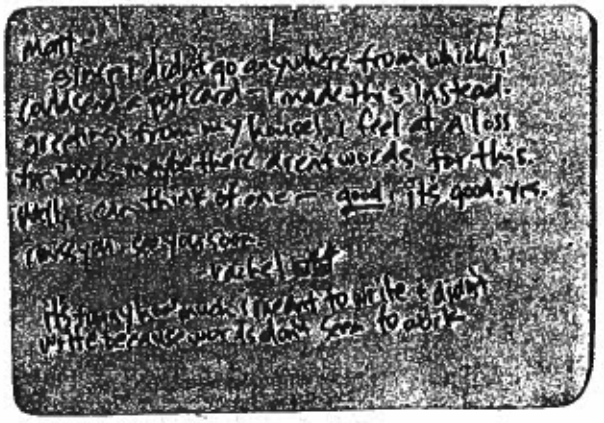
[redacted]

Seymour [redacted] believed in Eastern Thought / philosophy/ religion & the way everyone acted towards him contradicted all of that. He [redacted] believed that no one should have idolized him like that & also that he would never be able to change anything, while he was alive.

I think he might have committed suicide b/c Also he just wanted to know [redacted] if there was an afterlife - that was probably the only thing that he didn't know.



RACHEL



SO THAT I COULD BE DISSATISFIED WITH THEM & GIVE THEM THE BOOT. MOST OF THEM HAVE SUCCEEDED IN LIVING UP TO MY CHALLENGE. OR AT LEAST I CAN RATIONALIZE ~~OR~~ AND COMPILE ENOUGH EVIDENCE AGAINST THEIR WORTH TO MERIT GETTING RID OF THEM. I NOW REALIZE THAT IN JUDGING THEM & DEEMING THEM UNWORTHY, A LOT OF THE TIME I WAS MAKING THAT JUDGMENT MORE OF MYSELF THAN THEM. THAT'S NOT TO SAY I HAVEN'T DATED SHITHEADS, BUT THEIR THE ONES I GIVE THE MOST SECOND CHANCES TOO & ULTIMATELY I ~~AM~~ HAVE BEEN THE MOST SAD OVER THOSE RELATIONSHIPS ENDING.

FOR EXAMPLE (OF COURSE)-AL. I HAVE NEVER FELT AS BADLY FOR AS EXTENDED A LENGTH OF TIME AS I DID WHEN I DATED AL & CONSEQUENTLY FOR THE MONTHS AFTER WE BROKE UP. BUT ALL THIS IS STILL ADDRESSING ONLY THE SYMPTOMS OF SOMETHING DEEP IN ME THAT ONLY REVEALS ITSELF IN CLUES, NOT AS ITSELF. IT'S LIKE THE RUNNY NOSE & FEVER THAT ACCOMPANY THE VIRUS THAT CAUSES COLDS. I CAN BLOW MY NOSE ALL I WANT BUT I WILL NEVER SEE THAT VIRUS. SO EVEN BEING ABLE TO RECOGNIZE THE SYMPTOMS IN MY OWN BEHAVIOR & MENTALITY DO NOTHING TO DIAGNOSE THE UNDERLYING FAULT IN MY HEART - IF IT'S A FAULT AT ALL. (WHICH I BELIEVE IT TO BE).

ENOUGH ABOUT AL. I KNOW THAT EVEN IF I SUCK, HE SUCKS MORE.

I KNOW THAT YOU WOULD BE SATISFIED TO KNOW THAT I WAS AT LEAST SOME FRACTION AS AMAZED BY YOU THAT YOU ARE BY ME & I THINK THAT'S THE CASE. BUT THERE ARE SO FEW PEOPLE I HAVE BEEN TRULY AMAZED BY, AND IN ALL HONESTY ONLY A VERY SMALL HANDFUL HAVE BEEN MEN. I JUST DONT FIND THEM ALL THAT AMAZING. I THINK THE THING I AM MOST IMPRESSED BY IN MEN IS THEIR OCCASIONAL ~~ARE~~ ABILITY TO APPRECIATE HOW AMAZING WOMEN ARE ~~BEE~~ OR AN INDIVIDUAL MANS ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE THE ONE IN WHICH HE SHOULD HOLD A PARTICULAR WOMAN. BUT I FIND SOMETHING LACKING IN THAT EQUATION. SOMEHOW I AM NOT SATISFIED SIMPLY TO KNOW THAT SOMEONE IS AMAZED BY ME. I LONG TO BE EQUALLY AMAZED. BUT LATELY I HAVE ADOPTED A THEORY THAT IT IS THE ROLE OF WOMEN TO AMAZE AND THE ROLE OF ~~INDISCERNIBLE~~ MEN TO BE AMAZED. IM NOT SURE HOW I WOULD FEEL IF THIS THEORY WERE SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN. IT SEEMS SO UNBALANCED.

WEIRD HUH?

• • • • •

↑ PRE-READING YOUR LETTER

↓ POST READING YOUR LETTER

SO, I GOT YER LETTER (AND READ IT - OF COURSE). I MISS YOU SO MUCH. IT'S REALLY QUITE BIZARRE NOT TO SEE YOU FOR SO LONG KNOWING THAT IT'S GONNA BE A LONG TIME MORE. IT'S ALL VERY UNREAL TO ME. IT'S VERY DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE CONTINUING TO BE INTIMATE OVER THE PHONE. THAT'S CERTAINLY NOT TO SAY I WON'T TRY, IT'S JUST WEIRD TO THINK ABOUT. I'M SURE IT'S MUCH HARDER FOR YOU SINCE YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S SO FAR AWAY FROM HOME.

I'M SORRY I HADN'T BEEN MORE SENSITIVE TO THE FACT THAT YOU'RE HOMESICK & LONELY. THE LAST FEW TIMES WE TALKED HAVE BEEN ALL ABOUT ME & MY PLIGHT & I'VE BEEN PRETTY SELFISH WITH OUR PHONE TIME. I'M SORRY.

THE LAST FEW DAYS I'VE BEEN FIGURING OUT THAT I DON'T REALLY HAVE VERY MANY FRIENDS. BY FRIENDS I MEAN PEOPLE I AM TRULY COMFORTABLE WITH WHOM I TRUST, & WHO TRULY KNOW ME. THAT IS LARGELY DUE TO THE FACT THAT I AM NO LONGER COMFORTABLE WITH ME & I DON'T TRULY KNOW MYSELF. ON TOP OF THAT I HAVE BEEN AVOIDING KNOWING MYSELF. I'M SCREWED. I USED TO BE SO AT EASE WITH WHO I AM & HOW I AM & MY OWN CHARACTER. IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE FELT AT HOME WITH MYSELF. IT'S LIKE I'M JUST BORROWING THIS LIFETIME FROM SOMEONE OR WATCHING IT WHILE THEIR AWAY, BUT I DON'T HAVE THE KEYS TO GET INSIDE. OR MAYBE I DO HAVE THE KEYS & I'M JUST AFRAID TO GO IN THE HOUSE ALONE.

IT'S VERY DISENCHANTING TO THINK THAT NONE OF THIS IS GOING TO GO AWAY. I MAY ALWAYS BE THIS UNHAPPY OR UNCOMFORTABLE OR WHATEVER IT IS. I'VE HAD A KNOT IN MY STOMACH FOR WEEKS. I'M SURE I'M STARTING TO BABBLE, SO I'LL TRY TO MAKE SOME SENSE.

I JUST WANT TO EITHER BE THE SAME PERSON I WAS WHEN I USED TO BE SO SURE I LIKED MYSELF OR LIKE THE SELF I AM NOW. THE PROBLEM IS THAT IT'S NOT POSSIBLE TO GO BACK IN TIME & CHANGE ALL THE THINGS THAT MADE ME DIFFERENT, AND I DON'T KNOW WHO I AM NOW. I'M SCREWED.

AND CIRCUS-CIRCUS IS VERY ANGRY AT ME & HE WON'T TELL ME WHY. HE ACTUALLY HISSED AT ME THREE TIMES. THIS IS VERY UPSETTING TO ME. I HOPE HE IS JUST JEALOUS OF MILDRED & WILL GET OVER IT SOON. IT'S MAKING ME MUCH SAD. I'M GONNA STOP WRITING NOW SO I CAN MAIL THIS EPIC LETTER. I'M SENDING YOU THE ORIGINAL I'LL KEEP THE COPY FOR ME.

I ♥ U,
ME
XOXOXOXO

(IN 2 YRS W/ PICTURES)

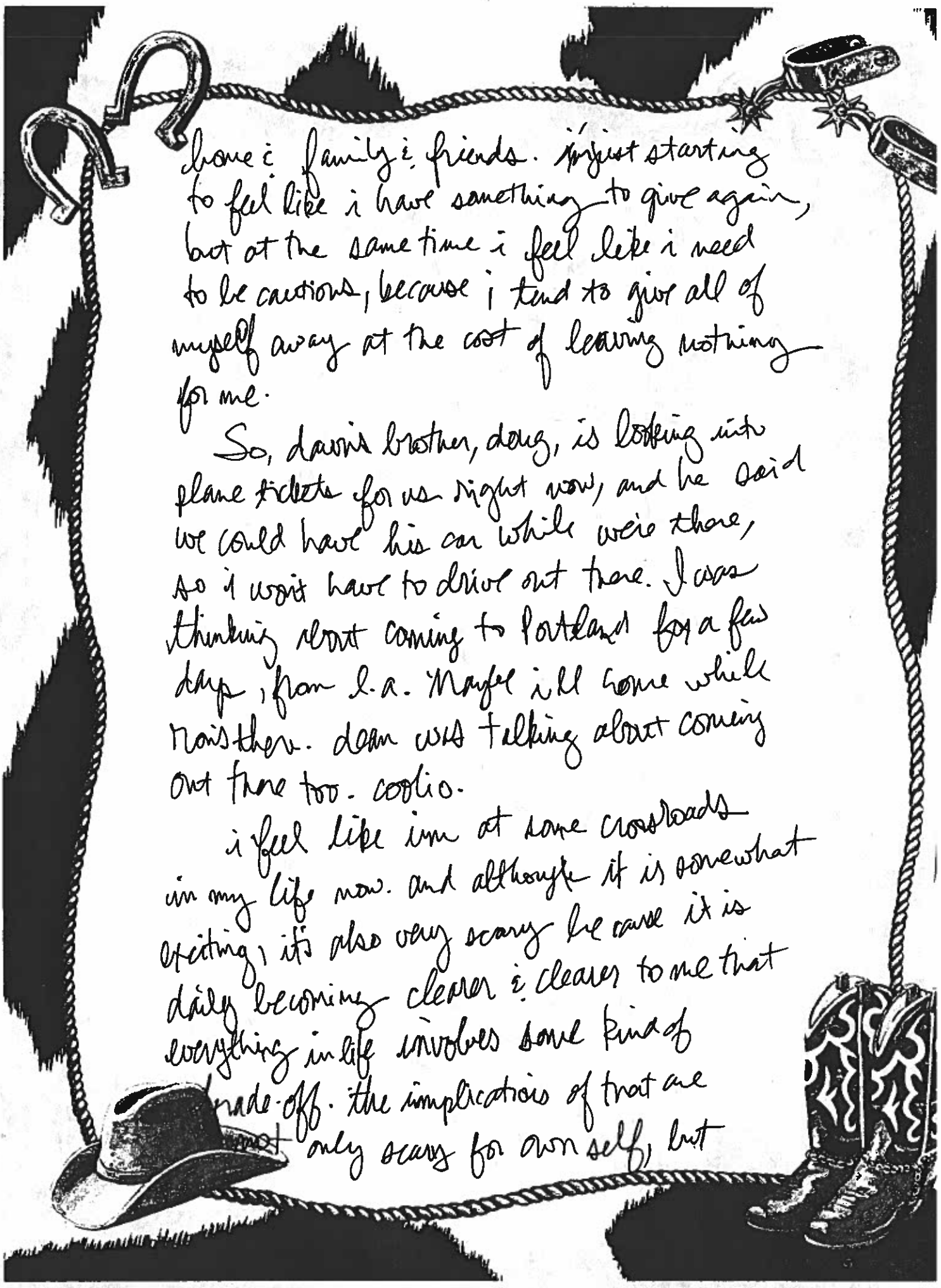
January 23. 1999

dear matt

i keep starting letters to you & then not completing them. then by the time i would have gotten around to finishing them, we've already talked on the phone. i realize you would still like to get a letter, even if it contained material we've already discussed, so i'm gonna try to be more gooder about writing.

okay - that out of the way...

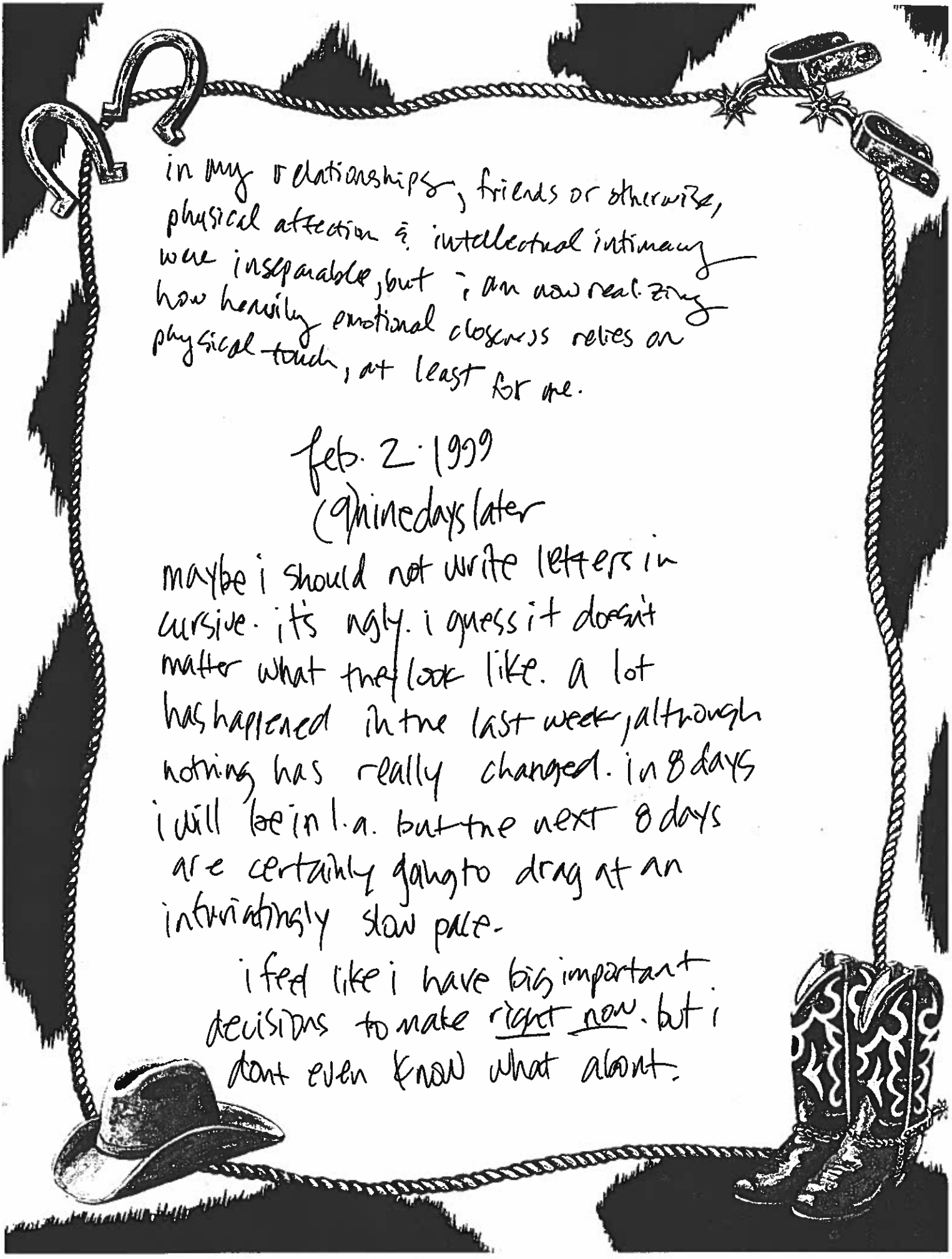
hello. i hope you are still excited about school at this point. but at the same time that i want to encourage you to complete this goal you've set for yourself, i hope you realize that if you change your mind about it, i would fully support anything else you decide to do. i know we've jokingly dubbed this goal as matt's last chance, but you know that's not true. i truly hope that you love what you're doing & grow to love it more, but if you don't, that's okay too. you know. i am also sorry that i have been neglecting you as far as what you're going through being away from



love & family & friends. i'm just starting to feel like i have something to give again, but at the same time i feel like i need to be cautious, because i tend to give all of myself away at the cost of leaving nothing for me.

So, dawn's brother, doug, is looking into plane tickets for us right now, and he said we could have his car while we're there, so i won't have to drive out there. I was thinking about coming to Portland for a few days, from L.A. Maybe i'll come while mom's there. dawn was talking about coming out there too. coolio.

i feel like im at some crossroads in my life now. and although it is somewhat exciting, it's also very scary because it is daily becoming clearer & clearer to me that everything in life involves some kind of trade-off. the implications of that are not only scary for ourself, but

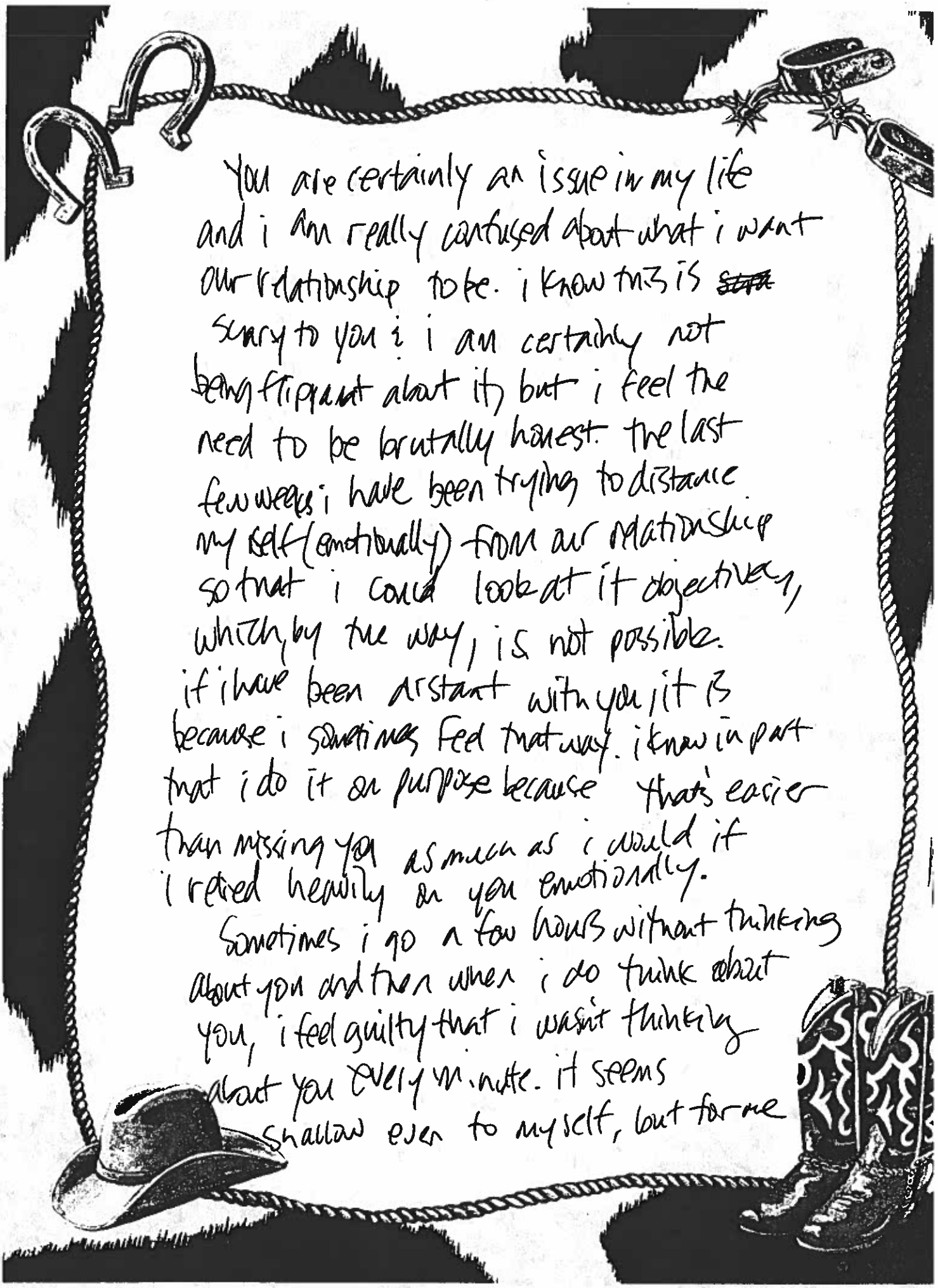


in my relationships, friends or otherwise, physical affection & intellectual intimacy were inseparable, but i am now realizing how heavily emotional closeness relies on physical touch, at least for me.

feb. 2. 1999
(9 nine days later

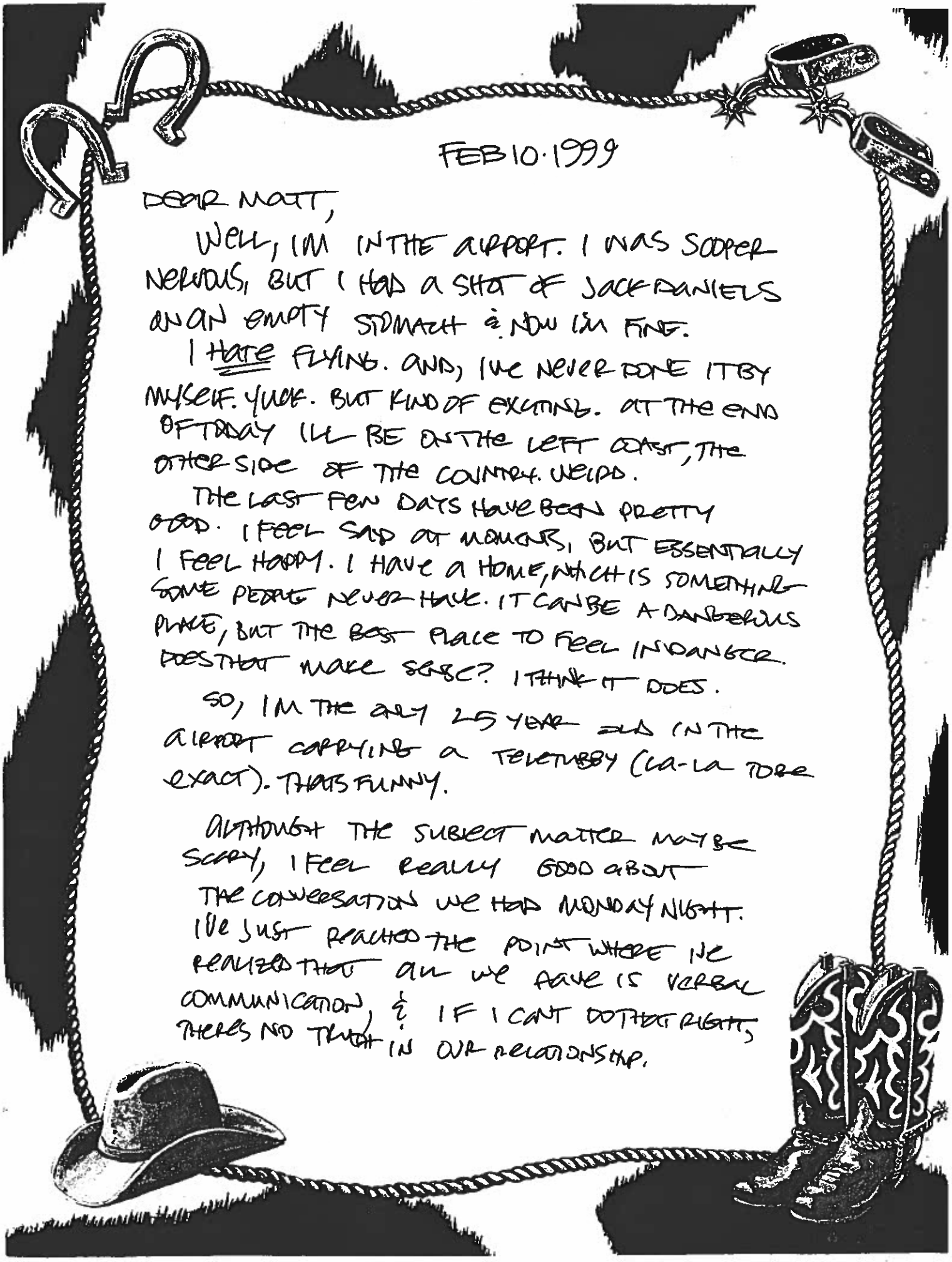
maybe i should not write letters in cursive. it's ugly. i guess it doesn't matter what they look like. a lot has happened in the last week, although nothing has really changed. in 8 days i will be in l.a. but the next 8 days are certainly going to drag at an intriguingly slow pace.

i feel like i have big important decisions to make <u>right now</u>. but i don't even know what about.



You are certainly an issue in my life and i am really confused about what i want our relationship to be. i know this is ~~scary~~ scary to you i i am certainly not being flippant about it, but i feel the need to be brutally honest. the last few weeks i have been trying to distance my self (emotionally) from our relationship so that i could look at it objectively, which, by the way, is not possible. if i have been distant with you, it is because i sometimes feel that way. i know in part that i do it on purpose because that's easier than missing you as much as i would if i relied heavily on you emotionally.

Sometimes i go a few hours without thinking about you and then when i do think about you, i feel guilty that i wasn't thinking about you every minute. it seems shallow even to myself, but for me



FEB 10 1999

DEAR MATT,

WELL, I'M IN THE AIRPORT. I WAS SOOPER NERVOUS, BUT I HAD A SHOT OF JACK DANIELS ON AN EMPTY STOMACH & NOW I'M FINE.

I HATE FLYING. AND, I'VE NEVER DONE IT BY MYSELF. YUCK. BUT KIND OF EXCITING. AT THE END OF TODAY I'LL BE ON THE LEFT COAST, THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COUNTRY. WEIRD.

THE LAST FEW DAYS HAVE BEEN PRETTY GOOD. I FEEL SAD AT MOMENTS, BUT ESSENTIALLY I FEEL HAPPY. I HAVE A HOME, WHICH IS SOMETHING SOME PEOPLE NEVER HAVE. IT CAN BE A DANGEROUS PLACE, BUT THE BEST PLACE TO FEEL IN DANGER. DOES THAT MAKE SENSE? I THINK IT DOES.

SO, I'M THE ONLY 25 YEAR OLD IN THE AIRPORT CARRYING A TELETUBBY (LA-LA TO BE EXACT). THAT'S FUNNY.

ALTHOUGH THE SUBJECT MATTER MAY BE SCARY, I FEEL REALLY GOOD ABOUT THE CONVERSATION WE HAD MONDAY NIGHT. I'VE JUST REACHED THE POINT WHERE I'VE REALIZED THAT ALL WE HAVE IS VERBAL COMMUNICATION, & IF I CAN'T DO THAT RIGHT, THERE'S NO TRUST IN OUR RELATIONSHIP.

I KNOW YOU WANT TO SAY THE "RIGHT THINGS" TO MAKE THIS CONTINUE TO WORK. BUT ALL THERE IS IS WHAT IS. IT CAN'T BE CHANGED, AND IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE GOOD OR BAD. IT'S ALL IN THE PERCEPTION. BUT I ALREADY SAID ALL THIS, SO I'LL STOP HERE FOR NOW.

I HATE FLYING. MY WAY IS THE HIGHWAY FROM NOW ON. ROAD TRIPPING IS THE WAY TO GO.

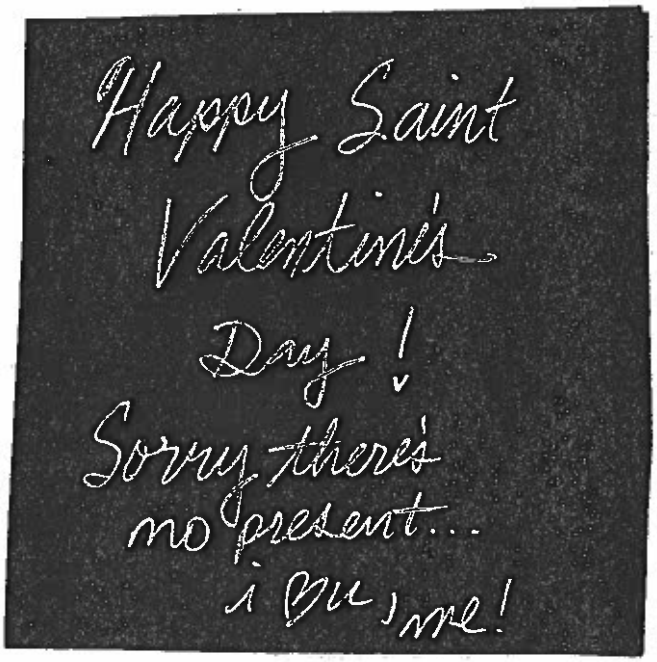
"PLEASANTVILLE" IS THE MOVIE ON THIS FLIGHT. THUMBS DOWN TWICE.

OH YEAH, I NOTICE THE CHECK YOU SENT ME FOR $25 - I TOOK HALF OF WHAT YOU HAVE. I FIGURED THAT WAS FAIR.

I'M VERY PROUD OF YOU THAT YOU ARE DOING SO WELL IN SCHOOL. I HOPE YOU'RE ENJOYING IT. GIVE THAT BITCHY GIRL A SMACK FOR ME.

BUMPING BOTTOMS 2!

LOVE YOU,
LOVE, ME
XOXOXOXO


Happy Saint
Valentine's
Day!
Sorry there's
no present...
i Bu, me!

DEAR MATT, NEW I'M IN LOS ANGELES
IT'S WARM & SUNNY BEAUTIFUL
BUT OF COURSE I'M HOMESICK & I'VE
ONLY BEEN HERE ONE DAY. IT IS
PRETTY EXCITING THOUGH. I REALLY
WANT TO MEET SOME PEOPLE, BUT
IT SEEMS LIKE NIGHT TIME BAR
SCENE WOULD BE THE PLACE FOR
THAT. IT'S HELLO HERE, I DON'T THINK
I'D WANT TO BE HOMESICK LONG.
I GUESS I'M MORE EAST COAST NATURAL.
I'LL WRITE AGAIN SOON. I LOVE YOU, DAVE

MATT CLAND
1635 N. JESSUP
PORTLAND, OR
97217-

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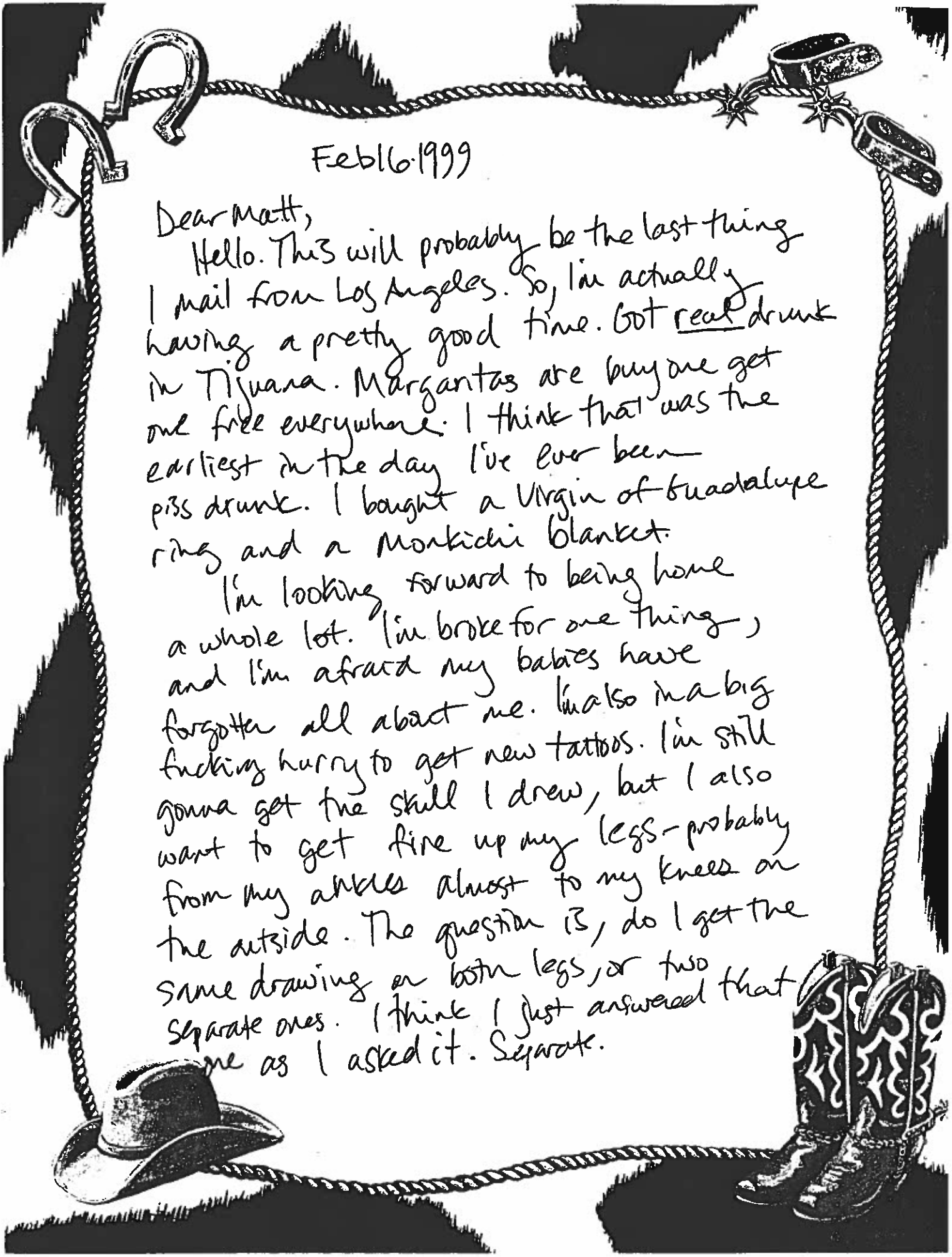
C 5023
Printed in Holland

Feb 16 1999

Dear Matt,

Hello. This will probably be the last thing I mail from Los Angeles. So, I'm actually having a pretty good time. Got <u>real</u> drunk in Tijuana. Margaritas are buy one get one free everywhere. I think that was the earliest in the day I've ever been piss drunk. I bought a Virgin of Guadalupe ring and a Mankichi blanket.

I'm looking forward to being home a whole lot. I'm broke for one thing, and I'm afraid my babies have forgotten all about me. I'm also in a big fucking hurry to get new tattoos. I'm still gonna get the skull I drew, but I also want to get fire up my legs - probably from my ankles almost to my knees on the outside. The question is, do I get the same drawing on both legs, or two separate ones. I think I just answered that one as I asked it. Separate.



I feel kind of bad because I know you wanted to ~~try~~ try to get together while I was here. But I kind of needed this vacation for me. We're not even gonna make it to San Francisco anyway, but I know you're probably a little disappointed that we didn't try to meet somewhere. It's weird though, because I don't feel like I went that far from home, so I don't feel like I'm all that much closer to Portland.

Hopefully by now you got your money. I hope it fits. Oh - by the way - the tiger print pants were too big on me, but not big ~~ass~~ enough for your fat ass.

I got a furry leopard print cigarette case today. But I quit smoking, so I'm gonna use it to put gum in. Or maybe I'll start smoking again.

I'll write again soon

I love you, me

FOR YOU & I'M SORRY, BUT I THINK WE CAN BOTH BE OKAY. I'LL TALK TO YOU SOON.

I LOVE YOU
- ME

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SPIDER-MAN™

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Dear Matt,
hello again. We just talked today, but i thought id send a short note to say hello. hopefully we'll talk again soon. you sound much less depressed than the last time we talked. i'm glad. maybe when you're home next we could hang out & actually have fun together

love, rachel

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epilogue

i am a piece of crap...of course i know this. i am the worst of all, and will never try to convince you otherwise. i don't even really know if its my fault or not. but ... one day we will run faster and strech out our arms further, and reach the green light across the way.

thanks,
matt